THE AGONY IN THE GARDEN. [*Hoffman.*


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## Gleaning.

The summer is over, the meadows are mown,
Bare lie the wide reaches where harvests have grown,
I pass in Life's autumn by flowerless path
And glean 'mid the stubble Love's gold aftermath.

Spring's blossoms have perished, but still on the bough
The last ripe fruits tremble; not yet has death's plough
The grave's narrow furrow cut straight in the sod,
And on the year's waning the blessing of God.

The edge of the cornfield where passed the keen blade
Is red with great bloodstains dead poppies have made;
But past is the burden and heat of the day
In the quiet of evening I glean by the way.

MOTHER ST. JEROME.

# Patience Sings a Song.

*By* A Nun of Tyburn Convent.

*Patience sings with a voice more beautiful than all the choirs of angels.*

—Sister Mechtildis of Magdebourg.

IN a certain monastery there was a monk with so beautiful a voice that all who came thither to hear the praises of God chanted in the holy Office felt their hearts lifted up to heavenly desires on wings of prayer, however engrossed they had been erewhile in worldly affairs.

And the secret of this was that Brother Placid's own heart, into which the words of the inspired liturgy fell as so many grains of incense, was all aglow with the heavenly fire Our Lord Jesus Christ came to cast upon earth. So rapt was he in divine things that, with spirit set free, he sang for pure love and delight in God's holy service. He would have thanked Him the same for this gift of song had it been given to another than himself, and e'en the more had that one thereby rendered Him the greater glory.

He sang with the joyous simplicity of a boy who, in the exercise of his young strength, leaps and shouts, yet does not on that account prefer himself to others whom he cheerfully acknowledges to be better and wiser than he, albeit they are not under the necessity of giving vent to their activities after the same fashion.

It befel on a time that this brother lay sick and his stall in the choir was long empty. The sickness was not unto death, and the brethren greeted him back among them right heartily. All loved him, and his voice had been sore missed in the work of God.

But though it was true that Brother Placid was again in his place, his voice was now silent. As strength slowly returned and his worn frame regained its vigour, it was looked for that he would be able to sing as of yore. And this hope was doomed to sink back into disappointment, so that all lamented thereat. Only Brother Placid made no lament. He was silent from complaint, as he was from song. Yet it was with him as it had been with a skilled craftsman whose hand had suddenly lost its cunning, with one crippled in the flower of his age or one deprived of the light of his eyes or the hearing of his ears.

The Father Abbot bade him implore God of His pitying kindness to restore the gift thus lost. In sooth, it seemed a laudable thing to wish that God should be served right well and worthily by those whom He had made the instruments of His praise—the mouth-pieces of His Church.



Brother Placid obediently joined in the prayers and novenas made for his recovery, and further, he besought Our Lady, Saint Mary, and his patron saints and good angel to intercede on his behalf. But the prayer which lay closest to his heart and went up with every breath was that his will might be ever more attuned to the adorable will ever done in Heaven, and that no rebellious thought might bring discord.

When the novenas of the brethren remained unanswered there were those among them who began to look askance at Placid. Even the Father Abbot, knowing full well how insidious are the wiles of the enemy, presently bethought within himself:

"Perchance some evil weed of self-complacency or vainglory taking root in his soul has choked the good gift of God." And, being a deeply pious man, this thought troubled him more than all beside.

Brother Placid felt the chill of the suspicion with which he was regarded and looked deeper within himself and in the mirror of the humility of the Divine Heart. And so seeking, he humbled himself the more, verily finding no cause for pride nor that he was good for aught save to gain the merit of patience for his brethren.

There was a day during Vespers when, according to his wont, he besought his angel to offer in his stead his debt of service—the praises that perforce lay silent in his heart. And his angel, who dearly loved the little human brother confided to his care, obtained for Placid so great a favour from their Heavenly Father that the rapture thereof transported him straightway into Paradise, while to all outward seeming he never moved from his stall.

For a brief wondrous space it was given to him to hear the music of the Nine Choirs blended with the perpetual praise of the Church on earth. Yet though Placid knew that therein were included the voices of his brethren, even then singing Vespers in the monastery chapel, he could not distinguish any one among them, for the sweetness and strength of each voice was not according to the perception of the senses, but according to the sweetness and strength of the soul of the singer, which is known only to God. And the melody as far surpassed all earthly melody as the spiritual soul surpasses the mortal body.

As Brother Placid listened, all enthralled, he became conscious of one voice that rose in beauty and sweetness beyond the rest, and he asked his angel concerning it.

Said the angel:

"It is the song that patience sings in a humble soul beset by trial and loss." And had envy been possible in Heaven the angel would have known it then, for there was a note in that brave song never given to the music of the seraphim who serve God without cost or effort.

But Brother Placid was still a denizen of earth, and only in Heaven on the briefest of flying visits, and he would fain have learnt, in however weak and imperfect a manner, some

accents of the strain of blithesome patience that soul was singing in the midst of her thorny lot.

For he did not wot that this was the song his own heart was e'en then singing in God's hearing. Neither did his angel say: "It is thine." That was a secret reserved to the day when the great "Well done" of his Lord should plunge him into eternal bliss. Had he been told this thing then his humility had scarce dared to believe it aught but illusion. Yet now he was by no means backward to rejoice with generous rejoicing in a gift so high excelling any hope or ambition of his own.

Seeing how thereby God was pleased and honoured, and what blessings flowed down therefrom upon mankind, his heart was flooded with rapture insomuch that it burst forth in the one way it might with him find outlet. It was the moment of the singing of Our Lady's Canticle. St. Mary herself supplied the keynote to the expression of his joy.

*Magnificat anima mea Dominum. . . .*

Hearing once more Brother Placid's voice, full of exultant mirth, his brethren could not forbear a smile and glance of wonderment beneath half-raised eyelids. Gladly they congratulated him as soon as opportunity arrived.

Most glad of all was the Father Abbot, and to him alone did Brother Placid tell of God's great grace vouchsafed to him through his angel in being admitted to that celestial concert and of the spirit-song which rose above the rest.

Still one thing perplexed him.

"'Twas in sooth a soul hit by many a hard stroke and one well worthy of our prayers, in whom patience wrought so marvellously; yet were it not a pity that cause for patience should be lacking and such a song die away?"

"Songs sung for the love of God never die away," was the abbot's reply. And a soft light was shining in his eyes, for he comprehended something of that secret which the other was so far from guessing.



# A Visit to Touraine.

THE poplars of the Loire! How the words recall the memory of that delightful region, which Mary Stuart loved and grieved so much to leave. No wonder she wrote: "Adieu, plaisant pays de France! O ma patrie, la plus chérie!" for it was Touraine which was in her thoughts and which tugged at her heartstrings, where she spent most of her happy childhood and her brief married life, in one or other of those royal castles, which, built originally for kings' favourites, were snatched from them at the sovereign's death and their own consequent disgrace.

The river rolls through the valley, broad and swift, its ample bosom dotted with green islands, some large, some small, and varying in size according to the state of the stream, whether it is high or low. Some of them sometimes disappear altogether. Wooded banks are interspersed with vine-clad hills, the "coteaux de la Loire," and smiling meadows, where the fields wear the national colours—red poppies, blue cornflowers and white marguerites. The river has a swift current but a shallow bed, which makes navigation difficult, and sandbanks, a characteristic of the Loire from its source to its mouth, yellow patches like the sand on the seashore. The sea is sweet and pleasant, and though warm in summer it is never relaxing.

In former days the floods caused great devastation, the great width of the river and its shallow bed rendering it peculiarly liable to inundations; but now the inhabitants receive warning from higher up the stream what day they may expect the rush of water, and prepare accordingly. It is a great sight to see the Loire "en crue." All the sandbanks disappear and most of the smaller islands; the larger ones are reduced to half their size, and the river rushes by like a boiling torrent, threatening to overwhelm all that stands in its way. It surges round the piers of the bridges, uprooting the smaller trees, and dashes against the dykes thrown up to defend the road. At Tours it rises to within touch of the three great bridges. It remains at its height for one whole day, and then gradually falls, but it is some time before the patches of white foam disappear from the water.

My cousin and I had long planned to see the castles of the Loire together. She had a craze for the Renaissance period, and nowhere can you see more perfect specimens of its architecture than in fair Touraine, the happy hunting-ground of the kings of France, where the artist, the historian and the poet each find material and inspiration. The whole country simply teems with romance: it forms the background of half Dumas' novels.

We had arranged that she should meet me at Tours on her return from a pilgrimage to Lourdes, undertaken in thanksgiving for her son's recovery from a dangerous operation. It was a convenient starting-point for the places we wished to see. She stepped out of the train with a curious detached air, like one just out of retreat, to whom earthly affairs and annoyances are of minor importance. The halo of her pilgrimage still lingered about her. I, who had been running about securing rooms and looking after luggage, felt like Martha in the presence of Mary: yet there was something to be said for poor Martha.

We deposited our luggage at a little *pension de famille* which had been recommended to us, and went off to see the cathedral before it closed. It was Corpus Christi, and little white-robed girls, first communicants, with muslin veils and wreaths of white roses on their heads, too sweet for words, were all over the town. The boys looked nice, too, with broad, white scarves round their arms, but less picturesque. We saw a pretty sight, a carriage with two little girls in white sitting frontwards in the place of honour, and their proud and happy parents sitting backwards. A special service was going on for them in the cathedral, which was crowded, and we had to wait till it was over before we could move about, but we feasted our eyes on the beautiful stained glass windows, which are considered the best in France, the dark, rich blue of the 13th century. I had never seen anything like them: they were an education.

When the service was over we managed to get round to the tomb of the children of Anne of Brittany—an exquisite monument: it would be worth while visiting the cathedral for that alone. Two sweet little children carved in white marble, in quaint, old-fashioned garments, repose side by side, watched over by kneeling angels. The cathedral was closing, and we had to go, but we lingered outside contemplating the façade till exhausted nature asserted its claims, for I had eaten nothing since a French déjeuner at 11.30 that morning. A friendly passer-by directed us to a confectioner in the rue Nationale, the old rue Royale, where we had some excellent café-au-lait and cakes, and, thus fortified, our thoughts turned to the house of the Holy Man of Tours, which was one of the things we had come so far to see.

I had read his life in England without enthusiasm—the saints are often unfortunate in their biographers—but it was different here on the spot, especially when I had seen his portrait. It is a wonderful face, with an expression like that of the little saint of Lisieux, of whom so much has been said and written lately, a look in the eyes as though they saw something which we did not. She was young—scarcely twenty-four when she died—and very beautiful—and he was old; yet there is the same character in each face, the same look of decision about the mouth. Both know what they want to do, and do it: there is no vacillation, but what they want is the will of God.



The rooms in which he lived have been turned into an oratory, and are crowded with ex-votos; an atmosphere of peace and prayer pervades the place, and we found it difficult to tear ourselves away from it. Coming out of the chapel we mounted the shallow old stairs to his bedroom, and here my cousin, whose eyes were sharper than mine, detected a box for letters. "Let us write to him," she suggested, and we both did, a most un-English thing to do, and which we determined to keep from our respective families, but which seemed quite natural and suitable at the time. Did he read them, I wonder? In his lifetime he was accessible to all, and never turned a deaf ear to those in trouble. Downstairs we invested in little mementoes of the place, pictures of the Holy Face, which was Monsieur Dupont's great devotion throughout life, and which he shared with the Little Flower of Lisieux, another point of resemblance between them; a photograph of the Holy Man himself, and a little cross, said to promote peace in families, which I thought a most desirable object.

Léon Dupont was neither a priest nor a monk; to outward appearance just an ordinary layman, yet perhaps he exercised all the more influence on that account. His inner life was one of contemplation and close union with God. It required some courage in the days in which he lived to openly avow himself a practising Catholic, but he did not shrink from the test. Little by little he rose to heights of heroic sanctity, and even during his life-time he was known as the "holy man," so much so that a letter addressed to "the Holy Man at Tours" found its way at once to its destination. He revived the old devotion to St. Martin, which had almost died out in the town to which pilgrims from all parts of the world had once flocked to visit his shrine, and was one of the chief promoters of the new basilica built over his tomb. But he is best known by the devotion to the Holy Face, which he established in his oratory, and the miraculous cures which were operated through it.

There is a pretty story told of his conversion of an Irish Protestant shortly before the man's death, but it is too long to be inserted here. St. Patrick is not a stranger in Touraine: tradition relates that he once crossed the Loire on his cloak, using his staff as an oar, the river being in flood at the time, and on reaching the other side planted his staff in the ground, where the next day it was found to have taken root, and blossomed out as a hawthorn tree in the middle of winter. The village where this is said to have taken place is called St. Patrice-sur-Loire, and, like the flowering thorn of Glastonbury, the wonder is still to be seen at the present day.

We stepped out into the street, the busy, modern, human life, such a contrast to the calm recollection we had left behind! Tours is a delightful town, so bright and cheerful, and so attractive that French girls are not allowed to stay there much before their marriage lest they should refuse afterwards to live anywhere else. Our rooms were in a little

square close to the cathedral, formerly called Place de l'Archévêché, but since the Republic, re-named Place Emile Zola. Nobody, however, pays much attention to the new name. Every change of government in France means a re-naming of streets, and you can read history by following these changes. It was a pleasant summer's night: the sweet air of Touraine came in through the open windows, and we heard people outside talking quite late before we went to sleep. Every now and then the cathedral bells rang out with their deep, melodious tones.

We got up very early next morning, for we wanted to see St. Martin's tomb before starting for Chenonceau, the first of the châteaux on our programme. He is the patron saint of Tours, and takes us back to old Roman times; little medals are sold of him at the doors of the church, representing him dividing his military cloak with a beggar. The present building, with which Monsieur Dupont had so much to do, is modern, with the exception of two old towers, but the body of the saint lies in the crypt, and is the object of great devotion. People are seen kneeling at each of the little gratings, succeeding each other and reciting his litanies, but the day we went there the tomb was open, and full of flowers. We enquired the reason, and were told that St. Martin was really a Hungarian saint, and that Hungarian envoys had arrived to beg for some of his relics. Their petition had been granted, hence the opening of the tomb and the beautiful flowers. It is this part of the town which contains the most curious old houses, that of Tristan l'Hermite, the infamous barber and gossip of Louis XI, and a lovely little Renaissance hotel, standing at the end of a courtyard, which was once inhabited by Dunois.

Having paid our respects to St. Martin we hurried off to catch our train for Chenonceau, for there was only one during the day which was at all convenient. It is the prettiest, perhaps, of all the royal residences in Touraine: no wonder Catherine and Diane fought over it. It stands across the river on great piers of solid masonry, between which rushes the Cher, its waters sparkling in the sunshine, with beautiful woods on either side. The conception, I think, is unique, and though so close to the river it is not a bit damp. It is impossible to imagine anything more bright and cheerful—a delightful summer home. One could stand for hours in the long gallery watching the river. Here Mary Stuart spent her honeymoon, and wandered, no doubt, in those woods which look so cool and tempting.

They were women for the most part who reigned at Chenonceau, the most fairy-like of the châteaux, a long line of interesting châtelaines, beginning with Catherine Briçonnet, who constructed the main building, and whose initials, intertwined with those of her husband, are carved on the old tower, all that remains of the original castle. She was followed by Diane de Poitiers, who laid out the Italian gardens, which we admired from a respectful distance. It was



too hot to attempt them, for they were destitute of shade. She threw the bridge across the river, but it was Catherine de Médicis who erected the gallery over it and the rooms above. After Catherine came Louise de Vaudémont, the gentle wife of Henry III, who had an unhappy childhood and an unkind stepmother, which saddened her spirit. The story is told that she woke one morning to find her father's wife kneeling by her bedside. "Forgive me," she said, "for all I have done against you. You are queen of France." Of course Louise's consent was not asked, it was taken for granted, but she was sincerely attached to her unworthy husband, and inconsolable for his loss. A token of her grief remains to this day in the three words from Virgil which she had carved on the chimney-piece below his portrait:

"Saevi Monumenta Doloris"

(monument of a cruel sorrow). She spent the years of her widowhood here, and was known as the good Queen Louise. In much later years the castle was associated with Georges Sand, to whose grandmother it belonged, and whose son assumed the title of Monsieur de Chenonceau.

Up again early next morning, for we had to see Amboise and Chaumont on our way to Blois. Amboise delighted me, and took me by surprise; I had expected to find it historic and interesting, but not charming, which it is, with lovely gardens perched above the river, dominating the little town, which is so attractive in appearance that one longs to stay there. We began our visit with the exquisite little chapel of St. Hubert, where the remains of Leonardo da Vinci repose under a slab in the floor. There is a beautiful stone carving over the entrance door, Charles VIII and Anne of Brittany kneeling on each side of the Virgin enthroned, and below them St. Hubert with his hounds, the miraculous stag with the crucifix between its horns, St. Christopher with a very heavy Infant Jesus, and St. Anthony away in the corner. It is his cord that always accompanies the emblem of Anne of Brittany. I wanted to linger on the terrace and enjoy the view of the river, one of the most beautiful on the Loire, where it broadens out almost into a lake, but we had to hurry on with the rest of the party. We were taken through the gardens to the low doorway where Charles VIII is said to have knocked his head on entering, so violently that it caused his death a few hours afterwards. When one sees the doorway one can well believe it. It was an ignominious death for a king.

Then we came back to the main building, all that remains of it, the Logis du Roi, and saw the famous iron balconies from which the Huguenot conspirators were hanged, while the poor young king and queen were forced to sit by and witness the execution. The château belongs to the Orleans family, and I thoughtlessly asked our guide, a superior young man, with a polite but reserved manner, if they often came there.

"Never!" he answered, and I felt crushed. I remembered that, of course, they were not allowed to set foot in France.

We took the train on to Onzain, where we hired a little carriage for the moderate sum of four francs to take us up to Chaumont and back. It is inhabited and belongs to the Prince de Broglie; it stands on a height above the river in a beautiful park, rather like a Scotch place, less carefully kept than an English one. It is a perfect specimen of a castle, with moat, portcullis and drawbridge, all intact. The view is equal to that at Amboise, but the interior is more gloomy than that castle or Chenonceau. The rooms are dark, with rich, but sombre, furniture and heavy tapestry hangings; the windows, set in deep embrasures of the walls, are narrow, with small panes in iron fittings. The historic wing, the only one shown, is sometimes used for visitors when they are pressed for accommodation. I should not myself care to sleep in the bed-chamber of Catherine de Médicis, beautiful as it is with wonderful old tapestry hangings and carved wooden furniture: I should be afraid of an unwelcome visitant during the night. That restless spirit which was never quiet in life might walk after death. The room adjoining hers was that of her astrologer, and contains a fine portrait of her in her youth in a pink dress, of which I tried in vain to get a photograph. There is a beautiful staircase in this wing which reminded my cousin of the one at Fyvie Castle in Scotland. Some of the steps are very worn and uneven with age, and one imagines the tread of armed men wearing away the solid stone. Outside in the courtyard there is a curious old well with an echo in its depths.

These are only three of the beautiful castles of the Loire, but space forbids me to tell of more: of Loches, with its dungeons; of Chanbord, with its stately magnificence, capable of holding three courts instead of one; of Blois, the most wonderful and interesting of all the chateaux, with its dark tragedies and endless succession of historic scenes. But to those who have the time and opportunity for a short holiday in the most delightful part of France, I would say: go and see.

EDITH STANIFORTH.



# Ex Oppido.

"Go, serve my poor amid the city slums."
"Lord, work Thy Holy Will in me alway."
And through the noisy moment that benumbs,
From leason, farm, and forest far away
Float songs triumphant o'er the clanging hour,
And tower chimeth unto distant tower:

"Endure and hope, and be of right good cheer.
God hath not set His covenant aside.
The norm of all the ages bideth here,
And all the engine cities and their pride
Shall pass away like dreams, and in their stead
We shall once more uplift an honour'd head.

To ear the land, to shape and weave and spin
God hath appointed for man's handiwork.
Tho' for a season covetise may win
Her conquests and enwrap in deathly murk
Her upstart cities, and the land lay bare,
Sure doom shall overtake them unaware.

Believe us, and believe they shall not stand.
God for a season suffers them to be.
But once again uplifted o'er the land
The rood shall overlook their progeny.
Ask not the when and how till God make known
The overthrow of Mammon and his throne."

H. E. G. ROPE.

# The Critical Spirit.

IT'S no use proclaiming that there isn't an atom of the critical spirit in your composition—for there is. We all have more or less of it, whether we know it or not, and especially when we don't know it! If we don't criticise Mr. Daubem's pictures, we pass strictures on our neighbour's wife's headgear, and if we aren't critics of the alleged failings of our friends we become critical in regard to ourselves. If it isn't our style of walking, it's our manner of dress, and when it doesn't happen to be our personal appearance it's our health. We simply have to be critical of something or somebody. There is a story told of a certain famous personage who was so everlastingly critical of his health that he once called upon a specialist to discover how he was to know when his health wasn't all that it should be.

"Is that all that troubles you?" queried the man of medicine.

"Yes," was the reply.

"Well, then," came the advice, "rest assured that your health will be excellent so long as you can ask questions like that. You're all right while your only trouble is as to how you're to know when you're not all right. Three guineas, please."

The only people who do not criticise others are the ones that take to introspection, and the few who possess an 'umbleness passing even that of Uriah. And it is wonderful in what a spirit of cheerful tolerance we can comment on the flaws in other people and their works—more especially if these other people seem to suffer from the delusion that they are a trifle better than ourselves. Like the gentleman who was so convulsed with mirth in watching the clumsy efforts of his neighbour to parry the unwelcome attentions of a swarm of bees that he did not notice the numbers of them which were alighting on his own shiny cranium, we are so busy commenting on the patches on somebody else's garments that we have no time to take stock of the many rents in our own. It is so easy to be critical—so difficult to be correct.

They say that old Jove laughs at lovers' lies—for it seems that in addition to being blind, love now and again "exaggerates the truth"—and it is not to be wondered at if there is some imp of mischief that, whenever we fall into the trap of calling attention to the peccadillos of another, while blandly unconscious of our own graver faults, indulges in the impudent but expressive practice of what Brer Fox called "winking the left eye slow." Have you not often noticed how maliciously Fate times an exposure of some of your failings just as you had pointed out the flaws of a fellow-man?



The worst of it is that anybody can be a critic—and the world is not unaware of the fact. Sang Byron:

> A man must serve his time to every trade,
> Save censure—critics all are ready made.

Even when you are a recognised authority on some subject, if you venture to pass a stricture on the ill-conceived efforts of a worker in the same field, an unsympathetic public puts your well-meant remarks down as due to jealousy. Indeed, commendation is not always well received, for listen to what Tennyson says:

> When I learnt from whom it came,
> I forgave you all the blame,
> Musty Christopher;
> I could *not* forgive the praise,
> Fusty Christopher.

So no matter what turn your criticisms take, they are sure to give amusement, if not offence, to somebody or other.

We profess to ignore our critics, yet what an interest we take in their remarks after all? Only the really great can afford to ignore them; and have not the fabrics of the mightiest in the land been time after time tumbled by forces whose beginnings were the utterings of some, perhaps slighted, critic? In literature, the masters of the craft are known to be the severest judges of their own work, but the masters are few, and the great majority are far from being uninterested in the verdict of even the least mighty among the reviewers. We can say with Johnson that a wasp can sting a mighty horse, and that the one remains a noble animal while the other is but an insignificant insect still, yet few of us ignore the wasp. If we cannot revere him we can fear him—and to some minds notice of any kind is better than complete indifference. Just as those who have carved a niche for themselves in the temple of literary fame do not condescend to tell the multitudes how success in literature is to be attained—they leave all that to the pretentious mediocrities—so do the leaders in any craft leave the passing of puny judgments on the efforts of contemporaries to mere members of the rank and file. As Disraeli says: "You know who the critics are? The men who have failed in literature and art." And another writer declares: "Those who have failed as painters turn picture-cleaners, but those who have failed as writers turn reviewers."

It is idle to enquire whence the motive that actuates the would-be critic. It is an inborn spirit with most of us, an eternal itch that prompts us to show wherein someone else fails, how somebody could have done better than he has done. The trouble generally is unfortunately that we over—rather than under—do the business. Once let you be discovered in an unfair or an unjustifiable stricture, and your reputation is

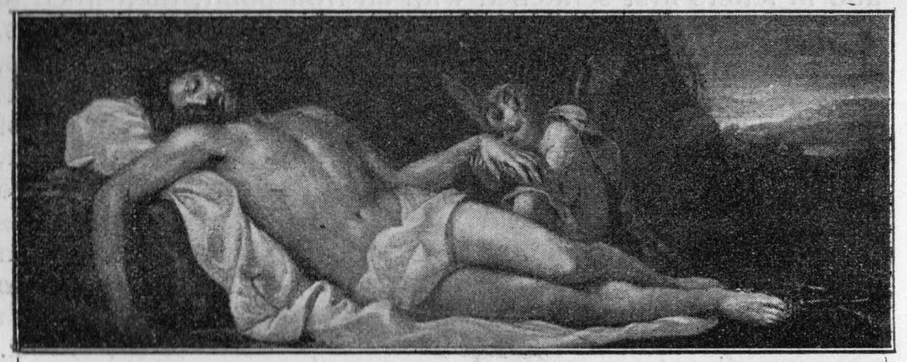
gone. One of the remarks attributed to Sydney Smith was: "Oh, no one minds what Jeffrey says—it is not more than a week ago that I heard him speak disrespectfully of the equator!" Let but a doctor pass an opinion on a legal point which we afterwards discover to be inaccurate, and at once our faith in even his medical knowledge is shattered.

One consolation is that you can nearly always defend yourself when people pass pertinent—or impertinent—remarks as to your qualifications. You have the example of the great lexicographer, who once stated that though a certain gentleman might not be a judge of an epigram he was certainly a very good judge of what was not an epigram. And that of Oscar Wilde, who defended reviewers charged with passing judgment on incomplete acquaintance with a work: "To know the vintage and the quality of a wine one need not drink the whole cask." However, most authors when they have expressed their opinions of the critics have not done so with any motive of belauding them. Hazlitt writes of "these pampered, sleek, demure-looking, spring-nailed, velvet-pawed, green-eyed critics," who, whenever they get hold of an unfortunate writer, "snap him up at a mouthful, and sit licking their lips, stroking their whiskers, and rattling their bells over the imaginary fragments of their devoted prey." Literary criticism is more dangerous than other sorts—for you have always to put it on paper, and the man you tackle may be an adept at replying to everything you say about him. It is said that one famous author writes about four times as much in reply to the reviewers as he does in "original" work!

As in literature, so in other fields the critical person gets more kicks than halfpence. Show another his faults—and he promptly turns around and tells you to look after yourself; praise him, and he as promptly informs you that he deems his reputation sufficiently safe to be above your commendation. One is almost tempted at times into the resolve that he will for the future let the world struggle on as best it may without the aid of his criticism, and he is a wise man after all who, though he could say a good deal, doesn't say it. But whatever you do, be sure to keep your own house in order, and be careful of pitfalls such as that into which a certain didactic mentor fell, when he concluded a pompous literary lecture thus: "The finishing a sentence with a preposition is the greatest error you can be guilty of."

THOMAS KELLY.





# The Highway of the Cross

## X.—THE VIA DOLOROSA.

WHEN we are told "then Pilate delivered Him to them," and "they led Him forth to crucify Him," we instinctively wonder how long was that sad journey, and is the route known, and is it possible to kiss now the very ground sprinkled with the tears, and trodden by the bleeding feet, of our Lord. The answer is partly "yes" and partly "no." The distance, taking into account the turnings necessitated by the inequalities of the land, is from half to three-quarters of a mile. The route is known in the main: from the site of the Prætorium to that of the buildings erected by Constantine over Calvary and the Sepulchre, and the exigencies of locality and the flow of traffic show that the lie of the road can be little changed. But the old level is gone: Romans, Persians, Saracens have burned and destroyed. Ashes and ruins lie deeper in other parts of the city; some five or six feet cover the road traversed by our Lord from the Prætorium to Golgotha.

It was "about the sixth hour," *i.e.*, nearing mid-day, when the procession emerged from the Prætorium. The space in front and the descent to the broad road beneath were thronged by the angry crowd that had been for hours clamouring for the death sentence, and now was rejoicing in its success. First came a herald sounding from time to time a trumpet and proclaiming the names and crimes of the condemned. After him the centurion, charged to keep order, and see the executions duly carried out; he would have with him forty or fifty men chosen out of the hundred under his command. Then a soldier bearing on a pole a large wooden tablet with the inscription, in three languages, "Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"; it is written on a white ground

and in letters first scratched with an iron point, then filled in with red. Following him were two or three files of soldiers, six abreast, in chestnut-coloured tunics and iron breast-plates, with spears resting on their shoulders, but under no standard. Then the few soldiers appointed for the actual work of execution, and carrying the necessary implements with them, and in their immediate charge were our Lord and the two malefactors, each, as the law prescribed, laden with the cross on which he was to die. It is probable that our Lord, in order that He might be the more conspicuous, was made to walk in front of the two thieves. The procession closed with more files of soldiers, to keep back the pressure of the crowd.

Our Lord wears His own garments, the white woollen tunic, now torn, stained, and clinging to His cut and bleeding body; over it the mantle, a square of coloured cloth, now roughly fastened on His shoulders by cords that are also round His neck. The crown of thorns has been for the time removed; on His head is the white linen kerchief—the "kufieh"—for to go bare-headed under the burning sun in such exhaustion would certainly have caused sunstroke, if not death. Thus He appears clothed as the people had known Him during the years of His preaching and miracles. But the whiteness of the head-dress now frames the pallid whiteness of the agony of the face. His steps are uncertain from weakness, and some of His footprints in the dust marked with blood. His exhausted frame bends beneath the weight of the cross, two pieces of pine-wood long enough to bear His body extended on them. The arms that hold and try to steady it are gashed and bleeding, and the slender hands, how thin and white! and soon another wound, on the left shoulder. The progress of the procession is slow, for the weight of the cross grows heavier and heavier, and the crowd presses upon Him. The rabble assail Him with most cruel and bitter taunts—"the venom of asps under their lips"—and some, when they get opportunity, throw the stones and dust of the road on Him.

At the foot of the declivity there was—discernible until recent years—an abrupt projection of the ground, high enough to embarrass those ascending, and a danger to those descending, especially if impeded in their movements. There tradition has placed the first fall beneath the cross, and tells that when our Lord rose, bruised and trembling, His strength quite failed and He was unable to raise the cross.

The procession has come to a standstill. The soldiers halt, silent and unmoved. The two malefactors look on wondering. The crowd gather round; some hiss and mock both the condemned and the executioners; some cry to the centurion to make no delay, for time is pressing. The cross lies on the ground. The road from the Damascus gate traverses the valley here, and by it a stranger is observed approaching, evidently from the country. The Romans were always peremptory in requisitioning among conquered peoples. The stranger is bidden lift up the cross and carry



it. Resistance is useless. Willing or not, he must obey. As a way is being cleared through the crowd, and they are preparing to start again, a group of women who have followed, apart from the rabble, and keeping close together, draw near. The delay and confusion make it possible for them to approach, for a moment, the prisoners. His Mother, the sisters Mary and Martha, Mary the wife of Cleophas, Salome, Johanna, and others. The Mother and Son are face to face, sorrow above telling reigning in their hearts, while she holds Him in her love and pours over His sufferings the sweet waters of her compassion.

Having gone for a very short distance along the broad road in the valley, the procession turns westward and ascends a short and rugged street that leads to the gate of Judgement. The street is steep, narrow, so that here and there arches overhead join the houses, dirty and dusty. Our Lord is scarcely able to climb the ascent; the heat is intense, the atmosphere oppressive, the crowd is still increasing, some standing at the doors, some impeding progress, some pressing round the guards. As He is slowly passing a house, a woman, Berenice by name, looking through the lattice that covers the window, and touched to the heart by His distress, snatches up a towel, hastily bathes it in cold water, and rushing from the house makes her way to His side. Her sudden daring saves her from molestation, and He, accepting the proffered aid, wipes His bleeding brow and pitifully stained face with the towel. Nor does she know how gracious her reward till safe again within the house, she unfolds the towel and her astonished eyes read the sacred impress.

Then passing through the gate of Judgement the procession found itself outside the city wall, the wall of Ezechias, in those days the boundary: a sudden change from busy street to open country. On either hand was the wall, about 40 feet high, strengthened at intervals by projecting towers, and at its foot a moat. At a short distance on the right, and about twenty paces from the moat, was the little knoll of Golgotha, or Calvary, distinguished from the neighbouring gardens by a broad, bare rock that crowned it, and from which it took its name, Golgotha, the place of the skull, through the supposed likeness to a bald head. Immediately in front of the gate was an open space where several roads converged to enter the city.

Here our Lord perceives a number of women gathered together at the side of the path leading to Golgotha; their children are with them, and they are sorrow-stricken and weeping. When He is close to them, and they see how terribly weakness and suffering have wrecked that beautiful manhood, they raise their voices in loud lamentation, despite the prohibition of the law. He turns to them, and, compassion answering to compassion, His thoughts run forward forty years, when the hand of His Father will strike for the last time and to utter destruction the city faithless to His love; when those young mothers will indeed mourn, and

those children gazing on Him now with open-eyed wonder and fear will see the last traces of Israel's freedom and nationality go down in the massacre at the desecrated Temple. He speaks the only recorded words of the sorrowful journey, quoting the prophecy of Osee and Jeremias' imagery of the green and dry wood: "Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not over Me; but weep for yourselves and for your children. For behold the days shall come wherein they will say: Blessed are the barren and the wombs that have not borne, and the paps that have not given suck. Then shall they begin to say to the mountains: Fall upon us, and to the hills, cover us. For if in the green wood they do these things, what shall be done in the dry." Words hard for Him to say, and heavy for them to hear.

A moment afterwards, at the foot of the gentle ascent to Golgotha, and within sight of the cave or vault where He must stay while the last preparations are made, He is offered the cup of strong wine mixed with myrrh and poppy juice, which while bringing strength would dull the brain and make the body less sensible of pain. Custom permitted this act of kindness among the Jews to those led out of the city to be stoned to death: among the Romans it was not unfrequent of charitable ladies to prepare and offer the potion to unfortunate men about to be crucified. Who presented it to our Divine Lord we do not know: all we know is that when He had tasted He would not drink of the cup offered for solace, because He would drink to the dregs the cup given Him by His Father.

PLACID WAREING, C.P.



# Battlefield Sketches.

## VII.—SOME INCIDENTS OF LIFE AT THE FRONT.

*(By a Passionist Chaplain with the Belgian Army.)*

The life of the trenches is certainly not the most pleasant of lives, but it has at least this advantage—that it leaves much time for thought and serves to give an interest to quite trivial things which would otherwise go unnoticed. Thus I have observed with surprise how obstinately the domestic cat remains attached to its natal soil. Here at the front the houses are all in ruins: of many not even a stone is left on a stone: no signs of life among the rubbish heaps: every living thing has taken flight or been taken, everything—except the cat, which sticks to its post, a symbol of unalterable fidelity to the soil.

In the daylight they are not often seen, for they lie in hiding: but towards evening they timidly make their way to the trenches to forage for the leavings of the day's rations left about by the soldiers. And very timid they have become: as soon as they see anyone they scamper away.

Of the dogs, on the contrary, there is no trace. They are more attached to the human being than to the soil. They followed their masters or the soldiers. The cat (the noun is feminine in Dutch and Flemish) is the stay-at-home, while the dog, according to the prescriptions of modern society, can follow his master everywhere. Some of the soldiers, however, have a dog to keep them company: in other cases, it belongs to a whole company: occasionally it recognises as its masters only the members of the regimental band. I know one of them which comes to awaken its master—a military chaplain—when a bombardment takes place during the night, as if it would say: "Master, there is danger and we must go seek a place of greater safety."

The animals are tenderly treated by the soldiers: it seems almost as though these, suffering so much at the hands of their fellows, felt a new attraction towards nature and creatures without reason. It is at least a sign that war does not make these men hard or cruel.

. . . . . .

You are well aware that here in the firing line one's life is not particularly comfortable during the night hours. Some time ago, after having done my spell of duty in the trenches, I went down in the evening to the village, some distance away, to rest. I was all alone and around me was unbroken silence and tranquility. The moon gave just sufficient light to make my way. I was sauntering slowly, however, when suddenly six great electric search-lights began to operate behind me. It was something at once novel and surprising. The six luminous sheaves of radiance wandered through the black heavens like spectres. They wandered here and there,

to right and left, uncertain of their way. I followed with attentive interest the play of those capricious beams which swept from earth far up into the darkened sky—countless miles. They looked like giant arms which man in his genius stretches out to ransack space in the obscurity of night. What could be the meaning of it? Had one of our airmen gone up so late to spy upon the enemy in the darkness? I listened attentively, and in fact soon heard distinctly the whirr of the motor. The enemy had heard it too, and before I had: but with all the efforts of his searchlights he was just as far as myself from discovering the object he was in quest of —for he made no attempt to fire.

An agreeable surprise was in store for me at the village, where I met several doctors with whom I had been on friendly terms at an earlier stage in the war. You may be sure that after a separation of many months we had much to tell each other. We chatted together for a long time, but at length, almost overcome by sleep, I bade them good-night with a friendly "Till to-morrow!"

"Say rather till after a while in the cellar!" returned one of them smiling. I went, however, with calm enough assurance up to my room. I had hardly time to undress when a shell came to disturb our arrangements. "Already?" exclaimed the officer who shared my room. At the same moment there was a knock at the door: "Come down quickly; we are being bombarded." We threw on a few indispensable garments and hurried down to the cellar. In a few instants we were again assembled together, something wanting to the toilet of each which gave occasion to more than one pleasantry.

A little while later a shell exploded in the village street, but fortunately left our house intact. I began to grumble to myself at the inconvenience of being disturbed thus in the middle of the night, when the same thought seemed to occur to the enemy—at least, in a few minutes all became tranquil again. "They are gone to bed," remarked one of our number, "and it seems to me the best thing we can do is to follow their example." We all approved of this sage advice and immediately made our way to our respective rooms. But the German gunners were merely making fools of us: instead of lying down to sleep beside their batteries, they had gone to drink a pint or play a game at cards: in less than an hour, when we were in a sound sleep, the uproar began again. We hurried again to our cellar, where we welcomed each other with more or less sheepish smiles. And so, more shells, which, however, did little damage, and then all seemed to end for good. After waiting some time to make quite sure we went upstairs again, only to resume ever and again our journey downwards to the cellar. It was only when dawn began to break that quiet came at last. The doctors took occasion to prolong their rest till ten or eleven o'clock in the day. For myself, I had to give up the idea of rest, seeing that I was due to say Mass early in the morning.

. . . . . .

I had occasion lately to visit a new cemetery for our soldiers. It had all the appearance of a garden in winter, with its



pleasant, regular lines of flower-beds, all alike, awaiting the soft zephyrs of the spring-time.

The dead are laid close side by side, just as they stood in the ranks in life, only a narrow strip of grass separating the graves. These are all made level with the ground, which gives them the look of little garden plots.

Over each grave stands a little cross with the name, birthplace, and regiment of the fallen soldier written on its arms, followed by the short but expressive words: Died in action, or died of wounds—*pour la patrie*.

Each little cross, besides, bears a number referring to a register in which is recorded carefully whatever is known of the fallen hero.

It was with deep emotion that I walked along the narrow paths reading the names of the dead and admiring how the graves were decorated. Some, it is true, have no ornament but the little cross of wood; here repose the remains of the poor young fellows who fell far from home and friends. But others there were adorned with taste. Occasionally a tomb-stone was set over a grave or a larger cross: in other cases, comrades-in-arms had laid down another little cross of coloured stones or of flowers. Often there were to be seen large bouquets or wreaths of fresh flowers kept renewed by the soldiers as a symbol of their remembrance and unalterable affection. Whilst I walked among the graves, an interment was actually taking place. Eleven coffins were lying side by side about to be laid in the earth. Further on I saw a soldier with a bouquet of flowers in his hand searching for the grave of a friend, perhaps of a beloved brother. He seemed to have a difficulty in finding it, went about from plot to plot, then retraced his steps, and at last came upon the object of his search, when the dear name showed above the wreaths of flowers heaped on the grave.

. . . . . .

The Belgian military chaplains have received a uniform. The varied colours of black soutane of the secular clergy, and brown, white and dark habits of the religious are no longer to be seen. For the purpose of securing uniformity and also for greater facility of movement on the march and in our duty in the trenches, we have been given a uniform which differs little from that of officers: khaki-coloured, with the chaplain's cross on the breast of the tunic, and another small metal cross on cap and cloak.

At first I had some fear that this change might possibly diminish the respect of the soldiers for their chaplains. But nothing of the kind: on the contrary, the chaplain has become still more the friend and brother of the soldier whose uniform he wears. Civilians, too, have not been long in learning to distinguish us from other officers, and never fail to salute us as they pass, with a "Good day, M. le Curé." The first day I appeared in the village street in khaki the children ran up as usual to ask a medal or an Agnus Dei. They even seem to prefer to make their confessions to a uniformed chaplain. Is it the colour that attracts them? Possibly so: *de gustibus et coloribus non est disputandum*.—F.C.

# The Children and Our Angels

To my soul the eyes of children are evangels,
  Uttering messages of truth, and peace, and grace:
And I ponder deep that mystery that their angels,
  Which in Heaven are, behold the Father's face.

As the sun, full-faced, gives light to sense of blindness,
  Of that mystery only this as yet I learn—
That they trust us to fulfil the law of kindness
  Which their angels on the Father's face discern.

Woe to those who set them evil as example,
  Ere of good or ill their souls have fully wist:
Woe to those who on their innocency trample:
  "Woe to those by whom offences come," saith Christ.

For most surely must their angels in high Heaven
  Wis of all their charges suffer here below;
And their knowledge at the Father's throne be given,
  And they pray Him, "Shalt Thou not avenge this woe?"

Shall He not?—And every cruel and faithless keeper
  Of the souls that come as dawns of better days,
Suffer, somehow, through the ill that rooteth deeper
  When the young feet follow theirs through evil ways?

When we drift us into selfish ways and dreary
  Do our angels follow down the evil years
Till their wings are drenched and soiled, and trail aweary,
  And they cannot see the Father's face for tears?

Then our eyes, where once all holy things collected,
  Looking forth as looked our angels at the throne,
Are at length like windows dim and long neglected,
  Of sweet old-time happy homes left drear and lone.

And when waking in the night, my spirit, hearkening,
  Doth a wailing in the sounds of silence hear,
I bethink of guardian angels, weeping, darkening,
  For their charges wandered far beyond their sphere.

And I feel the world-doom of fevered hasting,
  As of half-delirious things that needs must roam,
Is of trouble in our souls from the unresting
  Of our angels who would fain again be home.

Till our angels, with their angels, evil leaving,
  Do the Father's face behold continually,
We shall not wrestle well with aught of grieving:
  Saith the Master: "As are children ye must be."

JESSIE ANNIE ANDERSON.



# Retribution.

*By* GREGORY BARR.

[*The story "Retribution" is founded on the fact that at the destruction of St. Pierre only one person was saved, i.e., a prisoner condemned to death who was confined in the condemned cell which was below the ground. Some accounts declare that this man died three days afterwards from the effects of the shock. Other accounts assert that he survived and realised a large fortune by the sale of his photographs.*—Author's note.]

## CHAPTER V.

*Good News from the West.*

Letter from Victor Beauchamp to Mme. Bunsen:—

November, 1901.

Dear Madam—Although more than a week has elapsed since I set foot on terra firma, I could not get time to write my promised letter to you until to-day.

This is Sunday evening, and as I write a refreshing breeze blows directly from the sea, tempering the sultry heat which is so oppressive during the day.

We enjoyed fairly good weather during the voyage, which would have been uneventful but for the near frustration of your kind parting wish. When within about fifty miles of our destination I was delivered from the jaws of death, figuratively and actually—in the following manner. The weather was fair, but with fitful squalls; I was standing and chatting with Legrange at the taff-rail, when a sudden squall caused the ship to lurch heavily. Legrange slipped and knocked suddenly against me; I lost my balance and fell overboard. The alarm "Man overboard!" was quickly raised, the engine was reversed, the steamer stopped, and a boat was being lowered when I heard the cry "A shark!" I am a good swimmer, and had rather enjoyed the sudden immersion—but now a sickening fear crept over me; I felt that my last hour had come—no boat could be in time to save me—when "Dive!" was shouted from the ship, and as I did so, a discharge of firearms rang out, and I was saved. One of the officers had shot straight into the open mouth of the monster and the ball must have penetrated to the brain.

I was unconscious when I was rescued. Legrange was unremitting in his attention to me; he sat by my berth and entreated the doctor's permission to remain up all night with me. This, however, was unnecessary, and the following day I was up and about, none the worse for my involuntary cold bath.

On our arrival at our destination we were met by a messenger from the Governor with an invitation to Government House, where we got a very kind reception. The Governor pressed us to take up our quarters with him for a few days to rest after the voyage, but we both declined. I found a letter awaiting me from the manager of our bank in Fort de France relating to matters which I felt could be best settled by a personal interview. On consulting Legrange about the matter, he advised me to start at once for Fort de France, and not to take the seals off the safe in our own bank until my return. I asked him to accompany me and thus to see something of the island, but he declined, declaring that he would prefer a few days comfortable rest in his hammock to a ride on a pony over rough roads and lava-strewn hills. I feared he would be lonely. "Not at all," he declared; he would study ethnography by way of a diversion, and before my return would have a cumulus of proofs of man's descent from an ape, ready to force my acceptance of the theory, laughingly pointing out to me as he spoke the coolies, negroes, Chinamen, etc. The next day I started, accompanied by a guide. Our way lay along the sea coast, which I found indented by numerous inlets. In form the island is irregular and its surface uneven; many conical-shaped mountains of volcanic origin are met with. Occasionally our road led us towards the interior of the island, which I found covered by dense forests. Indeed, for such a small island, only about forty-three miles by ten it presents a wonderful variety of scenery. We came across numerous streams which are utilised for the turning of sugar mills. We passed many hills formed entirely of lava; in the rainy season the streams descending from these hills become dangerous.

I was agreeably surprised to find the negroes much superior in manner and appearance to negroes whom I had met elsewhere. I remained only two days in Fort de France, not liking to leave my comrade in St. Pierre too long alone. Though Fort de France is the capital, it has not the busy appearance of St. Pierre, which is the real centre of commerce, whence are exported sugar, coffee, cocoa and cloves; therefore the bank in St. Pierre has ten times more business to transact than the branch house in Fort de France. I found on my return that Legrange had made many acquaintances and seemed to have had a pleasant time during my absence. He is particularly proud of his skill in preparing "cock-tail," a very favourite West Indian beverage: I do not care to take it, but, *nolens volens,* I must accept it from Legrange's hands the first thing every morning. You see he is taking care of me. Indeed, I cannot sufficiently praise his manner of acting since he left France. In our anomalous nature it is not usual to find a young man who was reared in luxury and idleness suddenly developing into a man of self-denying business habits, for it is a truism that no European transplanted to the West Indies can apply regularly and steadily to business without a large amount of self-denial, yet Legrange is unremitting in his attention to business and assiduous in learning the duties of a banker. I hope his health will support the strain.



I am amused at the diversity of opinions regarding the climatic effects of Martinique on the health: the optimists say it is a most salubrious climate, whilst the pessimists cheerfully promise you malarial fever within a month and yellow fever before a year has elapsed. My private opinion is, that a person leading a frugal life and taking ordinary precautions can dispense with the services of the disciples of Galen as easily in the West Indies as in Europe. If the ethics were of a higher standard, the rate of mortality would not be so high, especially amongst the negroes, who also fail to distinguish between the pronouns "mine and thine." I was not sorry when Legrange presented me with a brace of pistols on which my name was engraved: they are a necessity against the marauding propensities of the negroes.

Our bank is in a healthy situation on the slope of a hill facing the sea; behind it, and at no great distance, rises Mont-Pelée, a volcano which is believed to be extinct, as no eruption has occurred for fifty years. Sometimes when I gaze on its frowning summit, 4,430 feet high, I think of the terrible havoc which would be wrought were the giant once more to open its cavernous jaws and to spew forth flames and lava.

My letter has grown to an abnormal length: when an exile writes to a dear friend in his native land he is inclined to become prolix: pray, let the fact that I look on you as such plead for my pardon.

Kindly present my compliments to M. Delormes and to Mdlle. Lucille; and with best respects,

I am, dear Mme. Bunsen,

Your unworthy but sincere friend,

VICTOR BEAUCHAMP.

## CHAPTER VI.

### *Mont Pelee Gives Warning.*

Mrs. de Norval was "at home," and dispensed coffee, ice, cakes and gossip with equal impartiality. She was a Creole widow of about fifty years of age. Report unkindly said that she would have no objection to change her name. She had one son and five daughters, four of whom were marriageable. Her verandah was the rendezvous of all who wished to hear highly-flavoured accounts of their neighbours' concerns. She was ably seconded in this laudable occupation by Miss Hedwige de Lisle, a spinster of uncertain age, blue spectacles, high nose, angular shoulders, and long words, which Frank de Norval, a disrespectful youth of sixteen, at once

surreptitiously translated for his sister Clarisse (age, fourteen) from a pocket dictionary which he kept for that purpose, to the extreme vexation of Miss de Lisle. Mrs. Merriman, the doctor's timid little wife, pious but nervous, with Mrs. Bridgeman, a lawyer's wife, contradictory but polite, completed the company.

"You take coffee? Miss de Lisle, this has been grown on my own plantation, and though I know it is not *bon ton* to praise one's own, still I can venture to recommend its flavour and quality," said the hostess.

"I believe, madame, that eucrasy is promoted by drinking this beverage, therefore I shall take just a half cup, if you please."

"U, u, u, eucrasy; I have it, Clarry—a state productive of health." This from Frank in a stage whisper. Clarisse tittered.

His mother looked daggers at him, but pretending not to hear, she said to Mrs. Merriman: "I am sorry the doctor cannot come to-day. How is his patient in the bank progressing?"

"I believe he is convalescent. The doctor has advised him to go for change of air to some of the other islands."

"There are contradictory statements about the relative positions of the new manager and his assistant. For my part, I prefer the latter to the former, who seems to be a self-sufficient, arrogant man, too proud to accept my pressing invitations under the specious pretext of want of time, whilst M. Legrange always came so willingly and was so affable, so easy of approach, and yet, report says that it is he who is really the master. I am told he is a multi-millionaire," remarked Mrs. de Norval.

"Then with great respect allow me to observe, you have been wrongly informed. I have learned from the best authority that M. Legrange is not even a partner in the firm, and that full authority rests in M. Beauchamp's hands," interposed Mrs. Bridgeman.

"I expected Nurse Williams to-day: she could enlighten us about the matter. You know"—apologetically—"that though she is an English nurse, she is a lady of high family: indeed, I think she must be related to Lord Williams, one of the officers belonging to an English man-of-war which touched at St. Pierre some time ago, and who drank coffee with me," said Mrs. de Norval.

"Pardon me for differing again from your opinion, madame. Lord Williams was not his name, though in familiar conversation he was thus addressed. His name was Lord William Sutton; he is the youngest son of the impecunious Duke of Norbury, and he is no relation whatever of Nurse Williams, who may be an estimable person."

"She is, but I am sorry to say she has her faults," replied Mrs. de Norval, nodding sagaciously. "Ah, here she comes. My dear friend, I am so glad to see you. I would not like to tell you all the nice things we have been saying about you. You will take——?"

"Just an ice and a little pineapple, please."

Whilst Nurse Williams is being served we will look at her. She is tall and slight; without being handsome she has a very pleasing countenance, with splendid black eyes: her mouth is firm, but a great sweetness lingers round it, and withal she has a quiet dignity of deportment tending to inspire a patient with respect and confidence.

"Nurse Williams, mamma, is just dying to hear news of M. Legrange," put in Clarisse.

Her mother looked aghast at being given away in this manner.

"Clarisse!—a lady should be seen and not heard. How much more should not this rule apply to a child?"

"I can give but little information about the gentleman," Nurse Williams said in answer to the child, but with a constrained manner. "I nursed him during his illness: he is better—he has gone away—*voila tout.*"

"Report says he is very amiable and immensely wealthy," simpered Adela de Norval.

"As for his amiability, Miss de Norval, I am really not in a position to answer."

"Is he pious?" queried Mrs. Merriman.

"Pious! My gracious! what a question to ask about a man! How could he be both pious and manly?" Miss de Lisle interposed.

"I can safely aver that he is neither one nor the other, whilst M. Beauchamp is both," answered the nurse quietly.

"Preserve me from a pious man! Such an inconsistency borders on idiocy, I believe. But what do you call pious?" the lawyer's wife continued.

"I call a man pious who, like M. Beauchamp, never fails to hear daily Mass, who approaches the sacraments once a month, who does his duty, who is courteous to his subordinates, and charitable to the poor," answered the nurse.

"He must have wealth if he can afford to be charitable," cautiously remarked Miss de Lisle, with a note of interrogation in her voice.

"From what I could understand he is far from being rich, yet he seems to be much happier than M. Legrange, who is the heir to great wealth," replied the nurse.

Here Mrs. de Norval looked triumphantly at Mrs. Bridgeman and said: "I thought so; I knew that he was wealthy, and that M. Beauchamp was not so."

"M. Legrange seems to care but little for his wealth, which has evidently failed in making him as contented here as M. Beauchamp is," said Nurse Williams.

"Our value of things usually decreases in proportion as our facility of possessing them increases, and *vice versa*. Now a strong, healthy man usually undervalues health, a modicum of which would make a poor invalid supremely happy," remarked Mrs. Merriman.

filled Victor's mind with indescribable alarm. He considered himself as being in some way responsible for Felix, whom he dared not bring to task: yet ought the father in Paris be left in ignorance of the ill-doings of his son? Would it not be well for Victor to advise the recall of Felix? But how would this advice sound, coming so soon after the letter of praise previously written?

There was another anxiety, the subterranean commotion had been steadily on the increase since the month of January. Beauchamp had no faith in the report of the Government expert who had declared that no danger whatever was to be apprehended from the sleeping giant; he rather believed the learned Jesuit who had carefully explored Mont Pelée and its environs and who urgently warned the people that a terrific explosion of the volcano would probably take place at no distant epoch.

Yes! this danger would simplify matters. By the next mail Victor would write to M. Legrange, telling him of the seismic disturbances and asking for a cablegram to be at once sent giving him authority to send home Felix with a large quantity of the specie kept in the bank, and which might be lost if an eruption of Mont Pelée took place.

By the next mail. Ah, in the meantime, what may ensue?

. . . . . .

The following day was Holy Thursday, which was celebrated with unusual fervour by the citizens who preserved their faith. The feeling of undefined terror caused by the ever-increasing rumbling and subterranean explosions heard in the vicinity of Mont Pelée aroused all the religious instincts of the faithful. At the same time, the powers of Hell seemed excited to greater rage against the God whose power was thus manifesting itself. A demoniacal storm of blasphemy burst forth from the crowd of unbelievers who dwelt in the devoted city. Everything sacred was scoffed at, and to such an awful degree did their irreligious frenzy reach, that on Holy Thursday* they crucified a pig in mockery of the Son of God. The faithful were too powerless and too few to prevent this awful act; they could only mourn over it in secret, and endeavour by their fervour to atone to the outraged Majesty of God for this terrible crime. Many spent the entire night, from sunset on Holy Thursday until Good Friday morning in the church in reparation for this outrage: amongst these was Victor Beauchamp, whose soul during this vigil was filled with such a flood of spiritual delight, that he instinctively felt that for him —Gethsemani was at hand!

*It was on Good Friday that this outrage actually took place, and the pig was buried opposite the Cathedral: on Easter Sunday it was dug up as a travesty of the Resurrection. This is a well verified fact.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### *The Blow Falls.*

Easter Monday, the 31st of March, was a Bank Holiday. To Beauchamp's surprise, Legrange proposed that they should go on a little picnic together. Accompanied by Simon, their black servant, they drove to the wonderful Grande Anse, where the Atlantic breaks on the shore in billows half a mile long. After a pleasant ramble they partook of refreshments. Then they explored the adjacent country until the heat became oppressive, when a siesta beneath the grateful shade of the trees was desirable. Simon kept guard lest a reptile should approach. What reptile could be more dangerous than the viper in human form who reclined just then beneath the waving foliage at Victor Beauchamp's side! who more wily than the traitor who hid beneath the shield of friendship the weapon with which he could stab his comrade all the more securely! The two young men returned to town in the cool of the evening, Felix declaring that as he felt so tired, he should go to bed at once. Victor went to the cathedral to pay a visit of reparation to the Blessed Sacrament. As he prayed, he felt an unaccountable presentiment of coming danger. Could it be that the offering he had made of himself on Holy Thursday night was about to be accepted? He continued praying until the clock struck eleven; he then returned to the bank.

"Is M. Legrange in?" he asked Simon, fearing that Felix might have gone in the meantime to the gambling house.

"Yes, Massa, him not go out at all, him asleep, him snore when me went to door."

"Thank God," thought Victor; he felt he could sleep quietly to-night.

Ever since Felix had insisted on getting a latch-key, Victor's nights' rest had been disturbed by the fear that Felix, when returning intoxicated, might leave the outer door open, and Victor had therefore felt it incumbent on him to rise ever and anon and try if the door was fastened. To-night, however, he could sleep quietly. To-night! Poor Victor!

Midnight struck. Felix Legrange was sitting at his desk, a number of false keys lay before him.

During Beauchamp's absence at Fort Royal, Felix had taken in wax the impression of every key in the house, and from these impressions he had got false keys made during his tour. He now selected the key of the safe and that of the office door and lighted a dark lantern which he had brought with him from France—for he had worked out the whole diabolical scheme in his mind before leaving his native land and he had come prepared for every contingency.

"Beauchamp must be asleep," soliloquised the traitor. "I took care to tire him thoroughly and to make him believe I am in bed. I will wait just one half-hour longer."

Going to the window he gazed at the star-lit ocean which lay stretched before him in majestic beauty. The huge ships riding at anchor bowed to the wind as it whistled through the forest of masts. On the distant horizon the white sails of the pleasure-yachts seemed like the wings of seagulls skimming over the waves, and the silver moonbeams rose and fell with the incoming swell.

"How calm it all looks," and with this thought came to the lonely watcher some far-off memories from the land of childhood, when he had sat by his mother's knee in the dear old home on the coast of Brittany. Had *she* lived, would he be what he now was? How sweet, how wise, how loving had been her words! as she, with her arm round his neck, had pointed out to him the road to virtue and honour, and he had promised her that he would never forget her counseis. But she had died ere he completed the first decade of his age, and her words had gradually faded from his mind, only to be recalled now when he was on the verge of committing his first felony. Was it too late to recede? He hesitated. Then arose the image of Lucille her scornful rejection of himself. At this recollection the hot blood mantled to his brow—revenge on the man who had caused that humiliation was now within his grasp. Should he forego it? A thousand times—NO!

He seized the keys and the lantern and descended noiselessly. Whilst unlocking the office door the key of the safe slipped from his finger and fell with a clatter on the stone pavement. He cursed his ill-luck, went quickly into the office and waited in trepidation lest the noise should have awakened Beauchamp. No, he slept too soundly after his excursion. Not a sound was to be heard. Cautiously slipping the slide from the dark lantern, Legrange opened the safe and took thence about five hundred pounds sterling, part in gold, part in notes.

"What is that sound?" Only the night wind sighing.

"There it goes again!" and he trembles like an aspen! He is so spell-bound by terror that he cannot move for a few minutes. He rouses himself and taking the lantern, creeps gently to the door and looks carefully down the passage. No one is in sight. It must be his own disordered nerves that disturb his imagination. Had he pursued his search further he would have found the Negro Simon watching him steadfastly from a dark corner.

Slowly and cautiously the guilty man mounts the stairs, pausing at Victor's door to listen.

"Yes!—asleep." With a sigh of relief Legrange regains his room, opens the secret drawer in his desk and deposits therein the stolen money and false keys.

Simon had been awakened by the noise of the falling key and fearing robbers, had issued noiselessly from his room. Being attracted by the light from the open door of the office, he had cautiously looked in before going to the manager's room to give the alarm. When he had seen Legrange at the safe he felt that there was no need for his interference. Here was a secret, which, if carefully kept, could, perhaps, be turned



to a profitable account at some future date. So Simon returned to his room, curled himself up on his mat and thought carefully over the matter. There was a small banana grove at a little distance from the town with a comfortable dwellinghouse attached, and Simon well knew, that if he had sufficient money to buy both, he could easily induce a certain dusky maiden to change her name; and then with the help of his Susannah, he might in time become a man of property, as good, if not better, than any "pore white trash!" His eyes glistened at the thought, for Simon was ambitious, and before he fell asleep he formed the resolution of remaining deaf, dumb and blind for the present, and of watching the manager and Legrange to see which would pay the better for his secret.

## CHAPTER IX.

### *On a Wrong Scent.*

The manager sat at the safe with a blanched face: he had counted the money it contained three times; he had gone over the books again and again and could by no possible means account for the deficit.

"Five hundred pounds missing." He examined the lock of the safe carefully; it had not been tampered with, no skeleton key could open it. The key of the safe had been under his pillow all night. Moreover, the door of the office had been locked until he himself opened it in the morning.

He touched the electric bell.

"Simon, tell M. Legrange I want to see him at once."

"Him asleep, sah, brought him shaving water, him no answer," replied the negro.

"You must awake him, tell him my business is urgent."

For a moment Simon felt compassion for the poor manager; but the picture of Susannah and the banana grove arose. No, it was too soon to speak. Why should a poor negro interfere between white folk? Later on it would pay better.

A full hour elapsed before Felix entered the office.

"What the deuce do you mean by disturbing a fellow's sleep so early? I am dead beat after yesterday, I can't keep my eyes open."

"I am sorry for breaking in on your slumbers, Legrange, but the matter about which I want you brooks no delay: the bank has been robbed."

"Phew. Great Scot! robbed!" Legrange gave a prolonged whistle.

"What will the pater say?" and Legrange succeeded in throwing such a look of amazement into his sallow countenance, that Simon, who watched from outside the door, chuckled with intense enjoyment No, he would not spoil this fun on any account! Not yet, at least.

"Has the lock been picked?" asked Legrange whilst going to examine it. "No," he continued, "it is quite uninjured! Where did you keep the key of it last night?"

"Under my head in my hammock where I slept. That is where I always keep both it and the key of the office during the night," replied Victor.

"Hu—m. Then *how* could the safe have been robbed? Perhaps you make a mistake and have put the money somewhere else and forgot where it is?"

Victor shook his head.

"You may have counted the money wrongly. Let *me* try. How much should you have?" Victor named the sum. Felix counted the money out loud, slowly and carefully. All in vain! Five hundred pounds were missing.

"What will you do?" asked Legrange.

"I must wire the numbers of the missing notes to the branch houses to have them stopped: I will then give information to the police."

"No! no! do not call in the police as yet; something may turn up, the money may be found."

"Impossible; I can swear that I left the money here last night and it has disappeared. No, Legrange, information must be lodged and lodged immediately."

This was precisely what Legrange wished for—to give quasi-publicity to the robbery and then to step in as a kind of "Lord Bountiful" and try to hush it up for a time, in order, later on, to pose as a friend of Beauchamp's.

Two detectives arrived at the bank in due time. They looked very wise, and drew long faces when they could not find a clue to guide them. Their first suspicion fell on Simon; he was easily cleared as he had foreseen would be the case: his bed was a mat, and an open shelf contained all his belongings; he had no place in which to conceal the money even if he could have opened the lock, which would have been impossible, as it was a patent lock of most intricate form.

The manager declared that the keys of both the office and the safe had been under his head during the entire night.

"Did you hear any noise during the night?" asked a detective.

"None whatever; I slept soundly."

The detectives looked at each other, the same thought occurred to both. Could the manager have been guilty of embezzlement? Similar crimes had been committed.

"Could we speak to each of the gentlemen separately?" asked a detective. Beauchamp at once withdrew to let Felix have the precedence; this was exactly what the detectives desired. They delicately mooted their suspicions, adding that as M. Legrange was the only son of the head of the firm they would like to know if he would wish the manager's room to be searched—the very last thing Felix would like, just as yet. He indignantly refused, declared that he had no more doubt of M. Beauchamp's honesty than of his own: that he would take on his own shoulders the responsibility of refusing this permission. The detectives shrugged their shoulders.

"What *then* could they do to discover the thief?" they asked.



"Nothing further," he replied. "I shall, if necessary, make up the deficit, but my friend must not be annoyed." He then called in the manager, in whose presence he declared that he would, from his own income, pay the five hundred pounds so that no further trouble need be taken about the matter. The manager refused absolutely to consent to this proposal, asserting that as he, and he alone, was responsible, the deficit would and should be made good by him if the missing money were not recovered.

The detectives smiled. This was very good acting they thought, but it did not blind *them;* they would keep their eye on the manager.

Days passed and brought no solution of the mystery. At Legrange's urgent entreaty no public enquiry took place; he argued that it would be utterly useless, that a watch could be kept on the employés of the bank to see if they showed an usual command of money, the missing notes could not be cashed without betraying the thief, and *what* more could be done? he reasoned.

Besides plying Beauchamp with these arguments, Legrange resumed the bonhommie, which a few months ago had pleased Victor so much. Thus Beauchamp was completely thrown off his guard, whilst the police authorities confided to each other their fixed opinion, that young Legrange was a complete "softy."

Although Victor was both touched and surprised at the sympathy which Felix showed, nevertheless, a suspicion would occasionally cross his mind that Felix knew more about the matter than he acknowledged, for he—and he alone—had the keys in his possession for some days when Beauchamp was absent visiting the branch house.

"*Could* Felix!! No! no. Utterly impossible. Yet——" The thought grew so persistent that Victor examined the keys very carefully to see if there were any sign of wax adhering to any portion of them. None whatever. Legrange had done his business only too well.

One course alone remained open for the manager to pursue. The mail would leave for Europe the following week. It would bring his resignation of his post to M. Legrange père, with an account of the robbery and of the fact that he himself, out of his own pocket, had made good the loss to the firm.

But the old proverb, "Many a slip 'twixt the cup and the lip," was to be realised in this, as in so many other cases.

*(To be continued.)*

# Paul Mary Pakenham, Passionist.

THIS is a most fascinating little book—a veritable poem in prose. It is the life-story of Captain the Hon. Charles Pakenham, of the Grenadier Guards, fourth son of the second Earl of Longford by the Lady Georgiana Lygon, daughter of the first Earl Beauchamp, and nephew by marriage to the "great" Duke of Wellington. Like Tennyson's Sir Galahad in the *Holy Grail,* Pakenham "lost himself to save himself" by leaving his brother knights to seek One alone who would finally crown him

"Far in the spiritual city."

At five-and-twenty years of age Captain Pakenham "was looked upon as a promising young officer towards whom his uncle, 'the Duke,' was well inclined. He had everything in his favour. His talents were of a high order, and his manner and address singularly graceful and winning. He was tall and slight, very fair, and of fresh complexion, . . . . . while there was something of such dignity and sweetness in his regular features that one could not help respecting him at first glance. . . . . He was the beau-ideal of the true Christian soldier, *a chevalier sans peur et sans reproche.*" His conversion to the Church, which took place about this time, reminds one of Alphonse Ratisbonne's—it was seemingly due to the wearing of a miraculous medal of Our Lady. A French lady had left the medal on a table in Lady Katherine Pakenham's room. Pakenham saw it and asked his sister its meaning. She evidently regarded it as something sinisterly magical, for she told him that "all those who wear these medals become Romanists." "Well, then," he said, "I will wear it to disprove what they say." The conversion of Newman, for whom he had always an ardent admiration, probably influenced him towards the Catholic Church. He began to have doubts about his own. He fasted on Fridays taking no food till evening, and prayed—this dashing young Guardsman! His abstinence and his religious tendencies were remarked by his brother officers, but, as he himself afterwards related to Father Ignatius Spencer, "Such was the high breeding and gentleman-like feeling in his regiment that not one contemptuous or unpleasant remark was ever passed upon him on this account." It was a fellow-officer, a devout Anglican, who persuaded him to come with him to one of the then leading Puseyite churches in London. Pakenham was strangely moved by all he saw, and after the service asked to be introduced to the clergyman who had conducted it. He took this clergyman

* "Paul Mary Pakenham, Passionist." By Rev. Joseph Smith, C.P. (Sands and Co., London and Edinburgh: 1/6 net.)



for his spiritual guide, went to confession to him, and from him learnt to meditate, especially on the Passion of Our Lord. This director it was who lent him "The Spirit of St. Alphonsus." Pakenham was captivated by the book, and when he had finished it, bought the other works of the saint. What he found in them puzzled him, and his spiritual guide too. He asked advice in many quarters, but received no satisfactory answer. "With the thoroughness which was always characteristic of him, he determined to go to the fountain-head of Catholic truth in England and expose his doubts and the state of his soul." He went to Wiseman. He could not have gone to one better qualified; but the grace had not yet come. Nearly a year passed after this before Pakenham received it. Probably the Gorham Judgment in 1850 hastened him into the Church, as it did others. On the feast of the Assumption, 1850, he was "received" by Cardinal Wiseman. One must read the book to get an insight into the mental sufferings that this conversion entailed. His mother in especial felt it intensely, and could not conceal her distress. "It is a question," writes Father Joseph, "whether she ever saw him again." The attitude of his eldest brother, Lord Longford, was one of mingled contempt and amazement. His sisters considered that he had brought disgrace on them. There was one exception, however, his maternal uncle, General Lygon, who still clung to him. Chapters 5 and 6 of the "Life," wherein the affection between uncle and nephew is described, are the most poignant. The conversion of Pakenham was a severe blow to the proud old officer; but when the young man decided to join the Passionists his grief was intense. "Good God," cried the old man one day as he found his nephew engaged in making some preparations for his departure, "Good God, Charles, you'll break my heart. Why do you persist in this madness? I have never hindered you in your religion; you have had your way in everything. If you like to be a Roman Catholic, that is nothing to me. If you wished to sell your commission, that also, though a disappointment, I did not so much care about. But why this new madness? My dear Charles, what you want is change. You have studied too hard and led too confined a life. Well, now, go abroad for a couple of years. You often said you would like to make a long tour in Italy and Greece. Well, go now and give up your prseent folly."

To this Pakenham had but one reply, that he felt it a sacred duty to respond to what he believed a divine call, that, much as he loved his uncle, he had to regard the words of Christ: "He that loveth father and mother more than Me is not worthy of Me"; and he had felt that the invitation of Christ was personally addressed to him: "If thou wilt be perfect, go sell what thou hast and give to the poor, and come and follow Me."

"But surely," the general remonstrated, "the Saviour could not have meant that for *such as you!*"

The general came, in the end, to recognise the futility of further expostulation, not indeed, it is said, before he begged his nephew on bended knee to allow compassion for the lonely old age of one who so loved him to weigh with him before taking the final step. It was the last cast, and it failed.

"Then, one Saturday afternoon, early in May, Captain Pakenham rode out of the park gates, accompanied only by a groom. They headed their horses for Broadway. At the monastery gates Pakenham dismounted and sent back his horse in care of the groom, with an affectionate note bidding farewell to his uncle. That was their parting.

"That same evening, as the novices were at recreation, the Father Master presented a tall, distinguished-looking young postulant to them.

"'What are we to call him?' they said.

"'Oh, call him Brother Charles.'

"Thus unceremoniously began Captain Pakenham's life as a Passionist."

Pakenham was about thirty years of age when he became a Passionist. He died in his thirty-sixth year as the first Rector of the Passionist Monastery of Mount Argus, Dublin. He had suffered for some years from a disease of the heart: he knew even whilst a novice that his life would be a short one, hence when his religious brethren remonstrated with him for his severity to himself, he would smilingly answer: "I must make up for my wasted years, and I have such a short time in which to do it." He could, had not his wondrous humility hidden from him his own saintliness, have made the words of that "most pure knight, Sir Galahad," his own:

> . . . But my time is hard at hand,
> And hence I go; and one will crown me king
> Far in the spiritual city.

The verdict of all, especially of his own brethren and the poor of Dublin, was that he was a saint.

*Paul Mary Pakenham* is most opportunely published now. It is a "life" that will appeal especially to soldiers. As a Protestant, there was nothing of the puritan in his habits; he mingled freely in society and shared with zest in all the pleasures and amusements of his class. He was extremely popular with his brother officers. "The gayest fellow in the regiment" was the phrase in which an old brother officer summed him up many years afterwards, as he lamented the fate that doomed the young Guardsman to isolation from the world in a monastery. It was said of him that "he did nothing by halves." "He took his profession, as he took everything else in life, seriously." Among his books still preserved are some dealing with military matters which bear trace of careful reading. The marks or notes pencilled on them are evidence of the interest and thoroughness with which the books were studied. He seems to have read omnivorously and in many languages. In a note-book—which is treasured as a relic by his religious brethren—there are passages culled



from the Fathers of the Church, from Newman and Pusey; from the German and Italian poets and philosophers, from French and English writers, Goethe, Schiller, Herder, Dante, Tasso, Rousseau, Voltaire, Locke, and others, all quoted in the original. English, Latin, Greek and French he had learnt as a lad; as a young officer he studied German, Italian and Spanish. He was no mere "young man of fashion," but a soldier whom those of his class might well take as a model. Handsome, talented, cultured, of noble birth, with the world at his feet, he gave up all for Christ's sake. "He lost himself to save himself."

In March, 1894, thirty-seven years after his death, "the chapel built by him, which had long stood useless, was finally removed to give way to a new cemetery for the use of the religious community at Mount Argus. During the removal of the remains of the dead religious from the old burial-place to the new, the members of the then community, doubtless moved by a holy curiosity, had the coffin containing the body of Father Paul Mary Pakenham opened. Whether it was due to natural or supernatural causes we do not care to conjecture, but the body was then found perfectly intact and incorrupt, and the face wore a most lifelike expression, as of one who lay in a peaceful slumber."

OSWALD DONNELLY, C.P.

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## In Thanksgiving, Etc.

**A. and R. B. (Slough, England)** send one shilling towards the expenses of the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel.

**A Friend** sends one shilling towards expenses of the Cause of Gemma Galgani, in thanksgiving for a temporal favour received through her intercession.

**Minnie O'Neill (Belfast)** sends three shillings towards the expenses of the Canonization of Blessed Gabriel, in thanksgiving for favour received.

**Margaret O'Donnell (Lixnaw)** sends three shillings towards expenses of the Cause of Gemma Galgani.

**J. D. (Liverpool)** sends half-a-crown towards the expenses of the Cause of Gemma Galgani.

The above donations, for which we are sincerely grateful, will be duly forwarded to the Postulator at Rome.

Contributions towards the expenses of the Causes of Blessed Gabriel and Gemma Galgani and favours received through their intercession will be gladly acknowledged in these pages.

**TO OUR PROMOTERS.**—In answer to inquiries made from time to time we think it well to let supporters of this magazine know that all our supporters and promoters participate in the benefit of four hundred and thirty-four Masses, specially offered every year for benefactors by the Fathers of this Province, as well as in the prayers, penances and good works performed daily by all the members of the Congregation of the Passion.

## A Literary Circle for Young Readers of "The Cross."

*Conducted by* FRANCIS.

*RULES OF THE GUILD.*

*I. The Guild of Blessed Gabriel is a literary circle open to boys and girls under 18 years of age.*

*II. The members will be expected to spread devotion to Blessed Gabriel of Our Lady of Sorrows, by practising the virtues of purity, charity and truth; and by living lives worthy of him who is to be their model and guide.*

*III. They will at all times observe the conditions under which the competitions will be held.*

*IV. They will endeavour to bring as many new members as they can into the Guild of Blessed Gabriel.*

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I AM sorry that a greater number of members did not set themselves the task of entering the senior competition this month. The subject was an alluring one, and I expected scores of captivating essays on the two saints who make such a strong appeal to every Christian heart—St. Patrick, great in his perseverance, in his love of penance, in his zeal for the salvation of souls; St. Joseph, full of a sweet humility, faithful, generous in his love and service, content to toil and watch and wait for the reward that was to come some day to him, who never failed or faltered in his stewardship. There was a good entry in the competition, of course, and all the work was well done, but somehow I was a wee bit disappointed—I had hoped to be literally smothered under the pile of compositions that would come along, each one of them breathing the love of the writer for those two great saints of God. However, that love burns bright and warm in their hearts, I know, and during the month of March they will often place their cares and doubts and pleadings at the feet of St. Joseph and St. Patrick, confident that the burden will be lifted in sympathetic hands and borne lovingly to the foot of the great White Throne, where the kind and merciful Creator ever listens graciously to the intercession of His saints.



**My Post Bag.**

Full to overflowing is my post bag this month, and pleasant as ever are the messages that have dropped into it from many a place where the Guild of Blessed Gabriel is dearly loved and held in high esteem. There is just one sad note in the chorus of greeting that comes to FRANCIS from big and little members. It is a farewell letter from one of his dearest friends, from one who has carried many a bird-song and many a ray of sunshine into the Guild—**Lilian Mary Nally.** "I have reached a little milestone," she writes, "that tells me I must take a new path that leads away from the Guild of Blessed Gabriel, and, FRANCIS, I would rather stay. The inevitable moment has come. O, I would avert it if I might! It is pain to say good-bye to the Guild wherein I have found so much of joy and happiness. Though I find myself, like Chrissie Burke and Proinsias Mac Thighearnain, outside Tir na nOg, I shall always look longingly in and in spirit share the joys of the friends I found in the Guild.

"'May every vagrant wind astir
Between us be a messenger;
Each falling wild rose petal blow
A haunting perfume where you go,
And all the brown birds in the blue
Sing memories of me to you.'

—*Beannacht leat.*" I should feel very sad and lonely indeed in parting with three such lovable friends as Lilian, Chrissie and Proinsias did I not know that their friendship for my own poor self and their love for the Guild will draw them back again and again and make us dearer to them as the days go by. The Guild would not be the same sweet place at all without Lilian Nally, and I trust she will come to us every month with a cheering and inspiring message from her mountain home. God bless and keep her and give her a full measure of true joy and happiness! I was delighted to get a letter from **Proinsias Mac Thighearnain,** in the course of which he wrote:—"I intend writing often; and when I become staid and aged, I will offer you sage advice as to how to improve—if improvement were possible—the pages devoted to 'our' Guild." That advice, and the advice or suggestions of any member of the Guild, will always be welcomed and hearkened to. I have handed to the Editor the message enclosed for him by Proinsias. **Gretta O'Kennedy,** of Lindsay-road, Dublin, makes sure of her welcome to the Guild by bringing in five other new members. Their names are **Kathleen O'Neill, Margaret Gummer, Maggie Roche, Una Murphy,** and **Josephine Quinn.** I am delighted to add them all to the list of my friends. **Maureen O'Brien** was more than pleased with the beautiful prize book I sent her. It arrived on her tenth birthday, so that it became both a prize and a present. A new member comes to us in the person of **Clare Deering.** She is very fond of reading, and hopes to win one of our splendid prize volumes some day. If she

works hard and perseveres, who knows? It was **John Joseph Kennedy** who recruited the batch of new members that came to us from Castlepollard some time ago. I am glad to know that fact and to be able to include his name in the honours list this month. When a list of new members' names is being sent, the name of the promoter should always be mentioned. **Chrissie Burke** sends hearty thanks for the last prize won by her in the Guild. "A more acceptable book," she writes, "it would be impossible to award—no other would be so welcome or so highly prized as this splendid bound volume of THE CROSS. In my spare moments all I have to do is to open its pages, and there I may live again my happy sojourn in the Guild, and I am sure to experience a world of pleasure in the retrospection." Sweet and consoling may that pleasure be to one who has often given pleasure to us all! I was very pleased with the nice little letter written by **Maighread (Muraid) Gordon,** whom I welcomed into the Guild about twelve months ago. She sends the pleasant news that she means to write me a letter every month in future. Her messages will be very welcome. True to the promise she made me last month, **Julia M. Kennedy** introduces five new members, whose names are **Isabel Morrissey, Patrick L. Kennedy, Rita Kennedy, Thomas Kennedy,** and **Vincent Morrissey.** They are all welcome for their promoter's sake and for their own. Another new member (introduced by Lilian M. Nally) is **Alice Joyce,** who considers the Guild "delightful," and who tells me she has spent "many pleasant evenings reading the essays of the prize-winners." I trust other girls will some day or other read with just as much pleasure the prize essays of Alice. A worthy holder of the promoter's badge is **Mary Rennie.** She is untiring in her efforts on behalf of the Guild, and this month brings along another new member—**Katie Rigby,** also of St. Helens, in England, who, I need hardly say, is welcome to a seat in our midst. "The more school companions I show THE CROSS to," writes Mary, "the more seem willing to join the Guild, and I hope in the future I may have the privilege of bringing still more members to you, and in this way be the means of spreading devotion to our dear patron." That is the true missionary spirit that will make the Guild known and loved everywhere. **Philie J. Cauldwell** returns thanks for prize volume and promises to bring five new members into the Guild before long. Another prize-winner whose success has given her much joy is **Bridie Sweeney.** Her dearest wish for a long time had been to win a prize in THE CROSS, and the realisation of that dream is "all her fancy painted it." Still another gratified prize-winner is **Bridget Trainor,** who is in high glee over her success. I was glad to hear again from **Mary Josephine Cullen,** who had been silent for some time. **Katie Kavanagh** gives us a picture of the springtime as she sees it::—"The trees are beginning to don their green foliage once more and are frequented by the feathered songsters, who sing their



welcome to the spring. All around us Nature shows herself in her brightest garb. Her beauty enchants the heart and raises one's thoughts above all worldly cares to the level of higher things." May that sweet uplifting be in all our hearts every day and hour!

**A Request.**

I am asked to request the prayers of the members for a very special intention. I feel sure they will be freely given.

**Important.**

(1) All newcomers will please write a personal note to FRANCIS, apart from their competition papers, asking to be admitted to membership of the Guild.

**Badge Winners.**

The Badge, bearing the portrait of Blessed Gabriel, which is awarded to each member who brings five new recruits into the Guild, is won this month by **Gretta O'Kennedy,** 103 Lindsay-road, Dublin; **Julia M. Kennedy,** 34 Millmount-avenue, Drumcondra, Dublin, and **John Joseph Kennedy,** Pakenham Hall-road, Castlepollard, Westmeath. The O'Kennedys Abu!

**The Victors.**

For the best short essay on "Two March Saints" the prize is awarded to **Freda Bottomley,** Manorley, Woodlands, Harrogate, England. I was well pleased with the efforts of Eily Barrett, Tillie Maguire, Mollie Cavanagh, May Kennedy, Martin Coyle, Julia Wall, and Beatrice Moran.

**Members Under 12.**

For the best legend of the shamrock I have awarded the prize to **Chrissie Sweeney,** Basin View, Tralee, Co. Kerry. Good legends were sent by Mary Josephine Cullen, Bridget Trainor, Maura Woulfe, John Joseph Kennedy, Maisie Burke, Maureen O'Brien, Gertrude Carton, Bridgid Mary Carton, Clare Deering, and Willie Moore.

## THE NEXT COMPETITIONS.

### I.—For Members over 12 and under 18 years of age.

A handsme Book Prize is offered for the best letter or essay on "My Favourite Play." Either a drama or a comedy may be selected.

### II.—For Members under 12 years of age.

A handsome Book Prize is offered for the best letter on Easter.

All compositions must be certified by some responsible person as being the unaided work of the competitors. They must have attached to them the coupon which will be found in this issue (one coupon will be sufficient for all the members of a family), and essays must be written on **one side only** of the paper. They must be sent so as to reach the Office of THE CROSS not later than **March 14th.** All letters to be addressed:—FRANCIS, c/o THE CROSS, St. Paul's Retreat, Mount Argus, Dublin.

## PRIZE ESSAY.

### TWO MARCH SAINTS.

#### St. Patrick (March 17).

Towards the close of the fourth century Patrick, a young Christian of Roman parentage, was tending sheep as a captive amidst the mountains of Antrim and Down. His time was wholly given to penance and prayer. The Psalms of David and the most beautiful hymns of the Church formed his daily petitions. After twenty years of training in the school of St. Martin at Tours, he obtained full powers from Pope St. Celestine and was consecrated bishop, and sailed for the Irish coast. The great result of his sixty years' preaching is known throughout the world. He found Ireland heathen, and left it Christian. It was there that it is attributed to him the famous story of the shamrock, representing the Blessed Trinity. St. Patrick's life was one of penance and prayer, his humility increasing as he drew near his end. Full of works and full of years, the great missionary died at Sabhull, A.D. 492. He is regarded as the Patron of Ireland.

#### St. Joseph (March 19).

St. Joseph was by birth of the royal family of David, and lived in humble obscurity as a carpenter, and yet God raised him to the highest sanctity, and fitted him to be the spouse of His Virgin Mother. St. Joseph, says the Scripture, was a just man. He was innocent and pure, and became the husband of Mary. He also was prudent and a great lover of silence, as became the master of the holy house, and above all he was faithful and obedient to Divine calls. When Herod sought the life of the Infant Jesus, an angel told Joseph in a dream to fly with the Divine Child into Egypt, and Joseph at once rose and obeyed. When the danger was over the angel again appeared to him and told him to take the Holy Child with His Mother back to Nazareth, where they could live in peace again. Here St. Joseph lived, always humble and patient, until his work was done. And then the greatest of God's saints breathed his last in the arms of Jesus and Mary.

**FREDA BOTTOMLEY.**